

Message Text

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ACTION EPA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00

ERDA-05 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 INR-07 IO-13 L-03

NSF-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-06 OES-06 SS-15

SP-02 INT-05 /101 W

----- 106125

R 201350Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9871

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CA

SUBJ: EPA ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN MEETS WITH CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT
MINISTER MARCHAND

1. SUMMARY: THE HON. RUSSELL TRAIN, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, MET WITH GOC ENVIRONMENT MINISTER ARCHAND ON MAY 18 TO DISCUSS VARIOUS BILATERAL ENVIRONMENT ISSUES. THERE WAS BROAD AGREEMENT THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL RELATIONSHIP WORKS SMOOTHLY AND COOPERATIVELY. THE TWO PRINCIPALS AGREED THAT THEY SHOULD VISIT THE GREAT LAKES SOMETIME THIS SUMMER, THAT THERE SHOULD BE ADDITIONAL SHARING OF RESEARCH ON SUCH THINGS AS NTA IN DETERGENTS, PCB'S, PHOSPHORUS LOADINGS IN THE GREAT LAKES, AND THE NEED TO KEEP ONE ANOTHER INFORMED ON MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS. MR. TRAIN ALSO SUGGESTED AND THE CANADIANS AGREED THAT SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS PERHAPS COULD BE ENLARGED TO INCLUDE OTHER USG PARTICIPANTS FOR TOPICS WITHIN DOE'S BAILIWICK BUT PERHAPS OUTSIDE EPA'S. END SUMMARY

2. THE MEETING, ATTENDED BY MR. TRAIN, MR. MARCHAND, THE AMBASSADOR, AND VARIOUS AIDES TO THE PRINCIPALS, OPENED WITH THE PROPOSAL THAT THE MINISTER AND MR. TRAIN VISIT THE GREAT LAKES SOMETIME THIS SUMMER. THE IJC
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MEETING ON JULY 19 WAS SUGGESTED AS A POSSIBLE FOCAL POINT FOR SUCH A VISIT, WITH THAT TO BE FOLLOWED BY VISITS TO VARIOUS KEY AREAS AROUND THE GREAT LAKES, SUCH AS DETROIT AND WINDSOR.

3. SUBSEQUENTLY, THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOWING
AGENDA ITEMS:

A. GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

THE PRINCIPALS AGREED THAT PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL WAS A CONTINUING PROBLEM WITH A SURPRISINGLY LARGE AMOUNT COMING FROM AGRICULTURAL RUNOFFS, DETERGENTS, MUNICIPAL WASTES, AND EVEN FROM THE ATMOSPHERE. THE LATTER PARTICULARLY WAS A NEW CONCERN AND COULD BE THE OBJECT OF JOINT RESEARCH. THE US WAS NOT YET READY TO GIVE ITS BLESSING TO PHOSPHORUS SUBSTITUTE NTA FOR DETERGENTS IN VIEW OF HEALTH PROBLEMS THAT COULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH IT. THE GOC DISPUTED US FINDINGS RE LEVEL OF CARCINOGENS IN NTA ON GROUNDS US TEST USED NTA FEEDINGS VASTLY IN EXCESS NTA LOADINGS FOUND IN GOC WATER SAMPLES. THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THEY HAD NOT SAMPLED NTA LEVELS IN FISH OR OTHER ORGANISMS AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT US GREEN LIGHT FOR NTA WOULD RESULT IN LOADINGS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN ANY CANADA WOULD EVER PRODUCE. SOME RADICALLY DIFFERENT TECHNICAL FINDINGS WERE ALSO DISCUSSED WITH THE GOC INDICATING THAT IT HAD CONCLUDED NTA DEGRADED RAPIDLY, WHICH WAS THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF US FINDINGS. THE GOC ASKED IF THE INDIVIDUAL STATES WOULD CONTINUE TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY ON SUCH MATTERS AND THE US REPLIED THAT THE INITIATIVE SEEMS TO BE MODERATING. IN ANY EVENT, THE US WAS STILL FACED WITH A PROBLEM: (1) THERE WAS SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO CAUSE CONCERN REGARDING NTA; (2) THAT LEFT THE US WITH A PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL PROBLEM WHICH WAS NOT YET FULLY RESOLVED; AND (3) THE US HAD TO KEEP CANADA VERY CLOSELY INFORMED AS IT PROCEEDED ON THIS MATTER. THE STATES WERE BALKING AT THE COST OF PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL, WHICH MUCH HIGHER THAN ORIGINALLY ESTIMATED, AND PERHAPS SOME OTHER METHOD WOULD HAVE TO BE STUDIED TO REDUCE PHOSPHORUS LOADINGS IN THE LAKES. IN ANY EVENT, IT WAS TIME FOR AN UP-DATE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ON THE NTA QUESTION.

B. THE CANADIAN CONTAMINANTS ACT

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MR. TRAIN REVIEWED BRIEFLY FOR THE CANADIAN THE VARIOUS PROVISIONS FOR A PROPOSED US TOXIC SUBSTANCE CONTROL ACT. HE WAS HOPEFUL IT WOULD PASS THE CONGRESS BUT SINCE IT WAS ELECTION YEAR IT WAS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT EXACTLY WHAT WOULD HAPPEN. IN ANY EVENT, IN VIEW OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE CANADIAN ACT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF THE US ACT, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS GET TOGETHER TO ENSURE THERE IS PROPER COORDINATION IN THIS AREA. SINCE SO MANY CHEMICALS WERE PRODUCED IN THE US AND EXPORTED TO CANADA, GOC STRESSED IMPORTANCE TO ITS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM OF PROVISION IN US ACT REQUIRING FIRMS EXPORTING TOXIC SUBSTANCES TO INFORM IMPORTING COUNTRIES OF THEIR TOXICITY.

C. PCB'S

MR. TRAIN POINTED OUT THAT THE US WAS MOVING AS FAST AS IT COULD ON THIS PROBLEM BUT THAT TO REMOVE ALL PCB'S WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND CONFLICTS WITH OUR DESIRE TO CONSERVE ENERGY. HE INDICATED THAT INDUSTRY MIGHT BE ABLE TO PHASE PCB'S OUT OF TRANSFORMERS WITHIN PROPOSED 30-MONTH LIMIT BUT NOT CAPACITORS. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT WAYS TO REMOVE PCB'S, TESTING OF SUBSTITUTES, AND THE EFFECT OF PCB'S THEMSELVES ON THE ENVIRONMENT NEEDED A GREAT DEAL MORE COOPERATION AND RESEARCH BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

D. AIR POLLUTION

THE PROBLEM OF AIR TRANSPORTATION OF POLLUTANTS WAS DISCUSSED WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON ACID RAIN AND SULPHATES. BOTH ARE LONG-RANGE PROBLEMS CRUCIAL TO AIR QUALITY IN THE US. BOTH COUNTRIES COULD LOOK TO EUROPE TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND ALTHOUGH GOC HAD NOT YET DECIDED HOW MUCH TIME AND MONEY IT COULD DEVOTE TO THIS AREA, IT AGREED THAT THIS WAS ANOTHER FIELD FOR COORDINATED PLANNING AND RESEARCH. THE US THEN REVIEWED ITS CLEAN AIR ACT AND PROGRESS IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

E. INCREASED SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND
ADVANCE NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION

THE US ONCE AGAIN STRESSED THE NEED FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND COOPERATION IN LETTING ONE ANOTHER KNOW WHAT WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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GOING ON IN SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. IT WAS HOPED THAT BEAUFORT SEA-TYPE EXPERIENCE IN NON-COMMUNICATION COULD BE AVOIDED, AND BY THE SAME TOKEN BOTH SIDES USED THE BEAUFORT SEA AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW BOTH COUNTRIES COULD COOPERATE. THE TWO SIDES AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A QUARTERLY EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON ALL ACTIVITIES GOING ON WITHIN EACH COUNTRY.

F. BILATERAL ISSUES

BILATERAL ISSUES WERE SKIMMED OVER VERY RAPIDLY SINCE THE MEETING HAD ALREADY GONE BEYOND ITS SCHEDULED TIME. MR. TRAIN ASKED WHETHER THE GOC IN THE FUTURE WOULD BE WILLING TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF THE MEETINGS SO THAT RELATED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE US COULD PARTICIPATE AS WELL. HE MENTIONED NOAA, BUREAU OF RECLAMATIONS, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, AND THE FISH AND WILD LIFE SERVICE AS ENTITIES IN THE US WHICH COULD CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH MEETINGS. IN MOST INSTANCES, ON THE CANADIAN SIDE RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITHIN THE DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT. THE GOC AGREED THAT THEY WOULD WELCOME SUCH EXPANSION ALTHOUGH IT DID NOT VOLUNTEER TO GO BEYOND THE DOE ON ITS SIDE OF THE BORDER.

4. PRIOR TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING, THE AMBASSADOR ASKED IF DOE WAS INVOLVED IN ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT OF AN OIL PIPELINE THOUGH PRINCE RUPERT. THE GOC INDICATED THAT IT HAD JUST STARTED SUCH AN ASSESSMENT ALTHOUGH IT WAS FOCUSING MORE ON THE KITIMAT AREA.

5. COMMENT: MEETINGS WENT VERY WELL AND CANADIAN SIDE SUBSEQUENTLY EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION AND PLEASURE OVER FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE NATURE OF TALKS. ONE IMPORTANT BY-PRODUCT WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS SEE IS THE EDUCATION OF THEIR NEW MINISTER IN THE AFFAIRS OF HIS BUREAUCRACY. ALSO, THEY EXPRESSED KEEN DESIRE TO FOLLOW UP ON VARIOUS PROPOSALS FOR COOPERATION AND RESEARCH. ENTIRE VISIT WAS A PLUS FOR US-CANADIAN RELATIONS AND GAVE POSITIVE FOCUS TO A PRODUCTIVE ASPECT OF THOSE RELATIONS.
ENDERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 15 SEP 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ENVIRONMENT, MINISTERIAL VISITS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OTTAWA02029
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D760196-0961
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197605109/baaaenks.tel
Line Count: 182
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EPA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EPA ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN MEETS WITH CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT MINISTER MARCHAND
TAGS: SENV, CA, US, (TRAIN, RUSSELL E)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006